

Boylston Finance Committee Meeting

Budget Review

March 2, 2022

Attendees: Eric Brose, Dave Butler, Karen McGahie, Steph Miczek, Howard Drobner, Greg Cusimano

- General
 - Approval of Meeting minutes: Dave made a motion to approve the minutes for 2/2 (as amended with minor punctuation/typo corrections), 2/16 (school committee) and 2/23. Dave made the motion, Greg seconded with unanimous approval.
- Discussion Items
 - CPA – Community Preservation Act
 - Not a budget item; funding would be raised through property taxes
 - Proposal would be for a 1% fee on real estate value, excluding the first \$100k. for a \$450,000 home that would be approximately \$45. Typical range for participating towns is .5% to 3%.
 - Money from this fund can be used on historic preservation, open space preservation, and affordable housing.
 - The State has a matching Trust funded by Registry of Deeds fees. In 2021 \$75MM was available to member towns (up from \$25MM in 2019).
 - FinCom opinion: Neutral – should be up to town voters to decide.
 - Budget – discussed the following:
 - Salary increase proposals and guidance from HR Administrator Jeffrey Vander Baan. Adjusted budget to align with those recommendations.
 - Merit Step Increase Program proposed by April Steward with the analysis and advice of HR Administrator Baan. Anticipated to go into effect 1/1/2023.
 - Impact of Merit Step Increases, Salary Increases, and COLA on the overall budget. Proposed recommendation is to utilize a 3% COLA for FY23.
 - Insurance proposal; Finance Committee supports the proposed 70/30 split but needs specific updated numbers based on this to include in the budget.
 - Longevity bonuses, and clarified that they only apply to at will employees, not contract/collective bargaining employees.
 - FinCom recommends moving to an electronic time management system vs. the paper-based system used today. More information on costs needed.
 - Police Department requests; recommending approval of one additional officer for FY23 and noted the need to get more information on costs/fees for police details and how this money is shared with the town.
 - Ongoing union negotiations mean there are a number of placeholders still in the budget. Unknown when union negotiations will be completed for both Fire and Police.

- Meeting adjourned: Dave made the motion to adjourn at 9:20pm and Howard seconded - all were in favor.